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AND

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SPECTATOR OF BOOKS.

SKINNER'S INDIAN SKETCHES.

Excursions in India; including a Walk over the Himalaya Mountains to the Sources of the Jumna and the Ganges. By Captain Thomas Skinner. 2 Vols. Colburn and Bentley.

THESE are two volumes of as pleasant and intelligent a description as any we have met with for some time, and offer a variety of new sketches and anecdotes of eastern scenery and manners. Captain Skinner is more general and versatile in his topics than Captain Mundy, whose descriptions of the Field Sports of India have lately been read with much interest. Unfortunately we have received these volumes so late in the week that we must make a hasty scramble of extracts, after a hasty dip into their pages, which, however, promise a further supply fully as entertaining as the following:—

Mahometan Exquisite.

"No description of buck is more entertaining, or more vain, than a Mahometan one; and, in truth, they have much more in their outward finery to be proud of, than we have in the sombre-coloured dresses of Europe: the caparisons of their horses, too, are so superb and various, that they have a great field for exercising their taste upon them.

"When a youth of family is fully equipped and mounted for the course, he shows most plainly, by his air and manner, that he is, in his own opinion, all in all; the fashion of his turban, and the curl of his moustache, are evidently the result of great pains. The horse is covered with costly trappings; and what little of his natural coat can be seen, is as sleek as possible. His tail is long and sweeping, and his mane plaited with the neatest art, having points of silver to each length, to keep it in its place. He is taught to caper, to turn, and to plunge; and is constantly exercised in these accomplishments, particularly when in a crowd; for the great ambition seems to be, as with beaux of less showy exterior, to attract attention, and create a sensation; and, as the scattered foot-passengers are seen flying in all directions before him, he is certain to attain his object."

Elephants and their Coolies.

"Dinner is over; and while the more precise and scrupulous are undergoing their ablutions, in as picturesque parties as they formed during their meals, the others, having satisfied their own appetites, are busily engaged in preparing for the animals under their care; the camels are returning loaded with branches of the peepul for themselves;

while the elephants, who have just received the call, are shuffling, with as much liveliness as they can express by their action, to a distant part of the ground where their cakes of meal, well baked, are spread out for them. A certain number is allotted to each; a fourth of which is destined for the cooly, who assists the mahout, or driver, in the care of him, and whose duty it is to bake the cakes and administer them, which is by no means a hasty operation. Each cooly puts the food into the elephant's mouth with his own hands, and waits quietly by his side till he has swallowed one mouthful, ready to introduce the next. The portion intended for himself he first shows to the animal, and pretending to receive his assent to the appropriation, lays it aside; and such is the sagacity of the elephant, that it is not too much to say he seems to understand the arrangement.

"One of the most striking features in the character of the East Indian is, the great devotion each person bestows upon his particular business. This arises, no doubt, from the division into castes, which having first introduced, now fosters the belief in the necessity of hereditary occupations. The Mahometans themselves, although privileged by their religion to be exempt from such restrictions, are not entirely free from the belief; and it is not uncommon to hear a low-born and uneducated person assert the privilege of his caste, when asked to do what he feels any repugnance from obeying. Each member, therefore, of that mighty race which sprang from Brahman's foot—the race of mechanics—devotes all his energies to that particular branch that was followed and handed down to him, generally unimproved, by a long line of fathers. Those men who attend to the care of animals are so identified with all their habits, that they seem to think of nothing else, and their charges appear so fully to understand them, that you may fancy they take part, particularly the elephants, in the conversation of their keepers.

"Sometimes the mahout gains such an influence over this animal, that he may be suspected of having compelled the affections by 'spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.' Some fault had been found, not long ago, with the driver of a baggage-elephant belonging to my regiment, and he was dismissed. The elephant had received his lesson, and would not suffer another to come near him. Several were procured one after the other, with excellent characters for kindness and management, but the gentlest creature seemed suddenly transformed into the most ungovernable. A month had passed without any return to rule, when the

discharged driver was again taken into service, and the elephant, delighted to see him, became once more fit to use. I have known the same tricks played with horses. They generally are unable to feed themselves, so dependant are they upon their grooms, when first bought from a native merchant, from their being accustomed to be crammed from the hand. As the natives like to see a horse shaking with fat, and his coat shining like glass, they stuff him three times a-day with an extremely nasty-looking mixture of meal and oil, and several sorts of spices, which they put into his mouth, having previously kneaded it into little balls. They assist the mastication with their fingers, and the poor animals undergo the operation with as little appearance of appetite as a well-gorged epicure, who thinks it necessary to gratify his palate, even when his stomach is gone. A string of horses at feeding-time presents rather a disagreeable than an interesting sight."

The Fair of Hurdwar.

"It is not an easy matter to describe the singular scene that is exhibited at the fair of Hurdwar, where the Hindoos assemble in countless multitudes, to combine, as they every where contrive so admirably to do, their spiritual and temporal pursuits. For several miles before we reached it, we had passed thousands of people in every description of vehicle hastening towards it. They were of all ages, all costumes, and all complexions: no spot upon earth can produce so great a variety of the human race at one assemblage, and it would be impossible to enumerate the articles of different sorts, or even the countries that produce them, offered for sale in the streets. The merchants in their own languages praise their own commodities, and make a confusion of tongues highly bewildering to a learned pundit, but to a European 'confusion worse confounded.' There are horses from all parts of the globe, elephants, camels, and buffalos, cows, and sheep of every denomination, thickly crowded together; dogs, cats, and monkeys, leopards, bears, and cheetahs; sometimes the cubs of a tigress, and always from the elk to the mouse deer, every species of that animal. Shawls from Cashmere, and woollen cloths from England, are displayed on the same stall; coral from the Red Sea, agate from the Guzerat, precious stones from Ceylon, gums and spices from Arabia, assafœtida and rose-water from Persia, brought by the natives of each country to the mart, lie by the side of watches from France, pickles from China, sauces from England, and perfume from Bond Street and the Rue St. Honoré. I

have seen a case of French rouge, and henna for the fingers of an eastern fair, selling in adjoining booths; antimony to give languor to an Oriental eye, and all the embellishments of a European toilet!

"In roaming through the fair you are amused by the tricks of the eastern jockeys; here one is ambling on a richly caparisoned horse, with necklaces of beads and bangles of silver, displaying his paces with the utmost dexterity; another is galloping as hard as he can, to show how admirably he can bring him on his haunches; while a third lets his horse loose, and calls him by a whistle, to prove his docility. Elephants and camels are exhibiting at the same time their several graces and accomplishments; while a Persian, with a brood of the beautiful cats of his country, stands quietly by to attract you with his quadrupeds, if you should fail in making a bargain for the larger ones. The dealers invariably ask ten times as much as they mean to take, and vary their demands as they gather from your countenance your anxiety or indifference for the purchase. It is not uncommon for a horse-dealer to fall, in the course of a few moments, in his demand, from ten to one thousand rupees. When the bargain is about to be concluded, the buyer and the seller throw a cloth over their hands, and naming a price, ascertain by the pressure of certain joints, how nearly they are making towards its termination. By this means, in the midst of a crowd, they deal in secret; and it is laughable to see, through an affected air of carelessness, how deeply they are interested.

"During their great attention to worldly matters, they are not forgetful of the grand object of the Hurdwar meeting: crowds succeeding crowds move all day towards the Ghaut, and no minute of the twenty-four hours passes without being marked by the cleanly rites of the worship of Gunga: the devout bathers of all sexes assemble in thousands, and perform their ablutions with so perfect a sincerity and indifference to appearance, that they seem nearly ignorant whether they are clad or not. The Ghaut presents as singular and motley a sight as the fair itself: Europeans lounging on the backs of elephants to witness the bathing—Brahmins busy in collecting the tribute—religious mendicants displaying every species of indecency and distortion—and Christian ministers anxiously and industriously distributing to the pilgrims copies of the scriptures, translated into their various languages. Some of these excellent men—for no difficulty or labour stays them in their heavenward course—sit in the porches of the temples, with baskets of tracts by their sides, giving them to all who approach: the number so disseminated must be very great, for every person is attracted to the seat of the missionary, as he passes from the river to complete his devotion at the temple. We hear very little of Hindoo conversion, and many who have not had the opportunity of witnessing the zeal and perseverance of our missionaries, may imagine that they slumber on their posts. But theirs is a silent way, and their endeavours, though

little seen or heard, have, under the Divine assistance, produced some effect. It would be enlarging on a well-known tale to dwell upon the sorrows that a Hindoo must bear, and the struggles he must make, before he can renounce his religion."

Wild Elephants.

"There are a great many elephants in the woods, in this part of India, but they are not so much esteemed as those which come from a warmer latitude; we have not met with any, although sometimes they are to be seen frequently enough, and have been known to come down and attack the tame ones. When they are met in herds they are not prone to mischief; but a solitary one, driven perhaps for some breach of law from its associates, is generally ready to offend. It is somewhat appalling, when not quite prepared for the onset, to hear the crackling of the wood, as a wild herd rushes through it. In travelling through Assam I have heard that this is frequently experienced. And in the interior of Ceylon, I have listened myself with astonishment to the tremendous sound. The elephants sometimes display a great deal of humour in their attacks. After having routed the party, who generally leave their goods behind, they amuse themselves by a most minute examination of them, and take real pleasure in their destruction. I remember a narrow pass in the kingdom of Kandy being a long time guarded by one elephant, who determined to allow no one to go through it without paying him tribute. On his first appearing at the mouth of it, he had frightened a cooly laden with jaggery, a preparation of sugar; the fellow, throwing his burthen down, ran away. The elephant picked it up, and finding it excellent, resolved upon levying a similar tax upon all future travellers. As the pass was on the highway to Kandy, he could not have chosen a better position for his purpose; and 'no trust,' although not written upon his gate, was distinctly enough notified to all passengers. The circumstance soon became generally known, and no cooly ventured to pass that way without having prepared a sop for the Cerberus who guarded it."

These two volumes are adorned with a couple of lithographic frontispieces of characteristic scenes.

GREENLANDERS.

Lives of Eminent Missionaries. By John Carne. Fisher and Co.

AMONGST all the cheap monthly libraries that have recently been published, we are somewhat astonished that the adventures and exertions of the missionaries of our own and other Christian countries, which offer a theme of romance and enterprize as rich and various as any other set of wayfaring men, should have been so long neglected. Mr. Carne, the talented author of the "Letters from the East," has at length taken up the subject in the little volume before us, which contains interesting memoirs of the famous John Eliot,—the Danish mission to Tranquebar, in the early part of

the last century;—Christian Frederic Swartz;—Hans Egede, &c. &c.—Our extracts are from the celebrated Moravian mission, which is full of entertaining materials:—

Greenland Superstitions.

"They believe in a superior Being, called Torngarsuk, whose nature is rather evil than good; but he is neither loved nor feared, and receives very little reverence. When they are in health, and their fishery is successful, Torngarouk is quite indifferent to them; neither offerings nor prayers are given. When they are ill or unhappy, or the sea animals leave the coast, recourse is had to the sorcerer, who is believed to be in connection with the deity. The former asks advice, and brings the answer. They believe in the immortality of the soul, if the idea of two places of abode, one in heaven, and the other under the earth, may be called so. They consider the subterranean abode as the happiest, because probably they think it is the warmest, where frost and snow cannot come. The most tasteful part of their belief is, that the northern lights are the souls of the deceased sporting in glory in the sky. Of apparitions they stand greatly in dread. The loneliness of their lives, with the long darkness, where the sense of light is so confined, and that of hearing is often invaded with the most appalling sounds, conduce to this belief. The accidents also, by which so many lives are lost in storms, and in fishing, affect their imagination. The spirits of the lost are heard to come on shore in the dead of night; they can be heard to knock the ice from their favourite kajaks, and utter a mournful wailing, that they shall sail in them no more. Sometimes also they are seen to sit sadly beside the pillows in their dwellings, as if they watched the feeble lamps, or came from their cold beds to revel in the warmth once more. The rocks also have their spirits, which are very dangerous, as they even come down into the houses by night, and steal the provisions; but it is said also, that these are Greenlanders, who, from despair and ill-treatment, fled from society for ever, and dwelt among the cliffs. It is no wonder if they availed themselves of the fears of their countrymen, to prolong their existence. The survivors always bind up the legs of the dead, and carry them, in winter, out of a window, and, in summer, out of the back part of the tent, to the grave, that their ghosts may not return.

"The sea-spectre in which they believe, is of a more fearful character. Egede, in his scarce narrative, published in 1741, and inscribed to Prince Frederic, dwells on these superstitions. This spectre appears before any misfortunes, as shipwrecks and storms, and is seen sometimes on a solitary field of ice, clad in a loose robe or shroud; at other times it flits rapidly over the frozen plain, and its frightful shrieks can be heard to a great distance. Those who see and hear it, know that inevitable misfortune is at hand: it has even been heard to utter words, but they only warned of shipwreck and death. There is another phantom believed in by the more superstitious natives; it is the figure

of a child, clad in swaddling clothes, with long beautiful hair, whom they call Marmel: he is seen at times on the shore, but oftener on the lonely isles, where he is heard to sing in a sweet voice, but those who are allured to follow him, are sure to be led into disaster and sorrow: this kajak breaks loose from the shore; the fields of ~~ice~~ are suddenly broken to pieces, and all escape prevented, or a snow-storm comes on, so that they wander about till they perish. There is another dreaded being, whom they call Elversortok, who, like the Grecian vampyre, feeds upon the dead, and is seen to hover round the places of graves. His countenance, they say, is ghastly and haggard, with hollow eyes and cheeks. The Ingorsoit are phantom living in the mountains, and in high and craggy cliffs: they sometimes entice the wandering Greenlanders to their homes, but it is only to enjoy their company: again they are seen to speed along the coast, and over the wild plains, enveloped in light and fire, like a meteor. The Ingorsoit make their appearance only when the perpetual night of winter is on the earth, and can be discerned far over the frozen wastes."

Greenland Customs.

"The Moravians found great difficulty in persuading the people to relinquish some peculiar customs. They had themselves loved the women they married, and wooed them fairly and honourably; and they wished that the converts should do the same: but, in Greenland, decorum requires that a girl must not choose to marry, nor the parents appear to give their consent to the union of their daughters—whom the young men carry off by force. Some friends accompany the suitor into the house of the parents, and assist in this summary mode of courtship, even in the presence of the latter. Often the girl knows nothing of her lover's attachment; but even if she does, she must make all possible resistance, and often suffer herself to be dragged along by the hair. If she persists in not getting up, and refuses to go quietly, she receives some hearty boxes in the ear. When she at length arrives in the house of her lover, she sits desponding, with dishevelled hair, and seizes the first opportunity to run away again. Away she goes, over the snowy hills and vales, and, as a last recourse, sometimes cuts off her hair, a decisive and awful step; for then she will certainly never be wooed any more. If she is brought back to the lover's house again, she sits for some days dejected, without eating any thing; and when no kind persuasions avail, the old women of the house fall upon her.

"Such a desperate kind of courtship the Moravians wished to abolish; they insisted on the suitor coming to them, and making known his attachment, and then disclosing it to the parents and the girl. They at last succeeded: it was, however, but imperfectly; the flight to the hills, the obduracy, and then the beating, continued to be loved in many instances. A widow must express her affliction not only by her bowed head and unornamented hair, but also by the

neglect of her person and dress. If, after some time has elapsed, she begins to look more clean and neat, this is a proof that she is not indisposed to marry again. The young women, when fourteen years old, begin to set a value on themselves, and wash their hair and persons. They love finery to excess. This appears in the gay trimming of their dresses, tent curtains, &c. Reindeer pantaloons are an especial article of luxury. "The demon of vanity," says the missionary, "also reigns in Greenland, among the female sex. A dress of handsome reindeers' skins is for a native woman, what the finest ornaments are for our ladies. In spite of their want of beauty, there is," says the writer, "a mildness in their manner, and an amiableness in their temper, which atones for it in some measure."

"When they row to other islands, or shores, on a visit, some presents are generally carried. If the guests are agreeable, they are welcomed with singing, and soft skins are put on the benches: the men sit on one bench, and the females on the opposite. The former talk gravely of the weather and of the usual sports; the women bewail their deceased relations with a low howl, that soon dies away; then they divert themselves with all manner of stories of hairbreadth escapes, ghosts, &c. All the while the stag-horn with snuff goes constantly round. When the repast is ready, the whole house, as well as some of the neighbours, are invited to partake. They have commonly three or four dishes; but if a feast is intended, there are many more.

"A Danish merchant, who was invited to a great entertainment by some of the richest Greenlanders, counted the following dishes—dried herrings, dried seal-flesh, boiled ditto; the same half raw and rotten, called mikiak; boiled willocks; a piece of a whale's tail dried, this was the dainty dish, this was the launch of venison, to which the guests were properly invited; dried salmon; dried reindeer venison; a desert of crowberries mixed with the chyle of a reindeer; the same enriched with train-oil. The talk on these occasions is prolonged for several hours; their tales or descriptions, as may be supposed, are prolix enough, but the audience is seldom wearied. The people are admirable actors and buffoons, and their little features are twisted into every variety of expression. When they relate how a seal was vanquished, they describe the very instant of time, the very spot, and then act over every motion, offensive and defensive, of the combat. The left hand personates the seal, and represents the various leaps the animal gave this way or that; the right displays all the motions and evolutions of the kajak and the arm; how steadily they aimed the fatal dart. The whole scene is exhibited with such a happy mixture of art and nature, that it is a pleasure, even to a stranger, to look on.

"The great festival is the sun-feast. Never had people more reason to celebrate his return; it is kept about the end of December. Over the whole country, large parties assemble, and treat one another with the best they have: excess in drinking is out of

the question, for they have nothing but water to drink. Night after night is now spent in dancing and singing. The most singular of their observances is the singing combat: if a Greenlander imagines himself injured by another, he betrays no sign of vexation or wrath, but composes a satirical poem; this he repeats so often, that the women and domestics at last get it in their memory; then he publishes a challenge every where, that he will fight a duel with his antagonist, not with a sword, but a song. The latter repairs to the appointed place, where the people are assembled. The accuser begins to sing his satire to the beat of a drum, the only instrument they possess, and his party and the auditory back him steadily all the while. He discharges so many taunting and ludicrous things at his adversary, that the audience are moved to continual laughter. When he has finished, his rival steps forth, and retorts, if possible, with yet greater ridicule and buffoonery; his party raise their chorus in unison, and so the laugh and the applause of the audience change sides. They are allowed to speak the most cutting words, but there must be no mixture of rage or passion. The whole assembly compose the jury, and give the laurel to the best and severest poet."

These memoirs are obviously, and perhaps not very elegantly, compiled from various original documents;—a continuation of the series is promised, and, we doubt not, will meet with a ready encouragement.

*MISS MARTINEAU'S POLITICAL ECONOMY.
Weal and Woe in Garveloch: a Tale.* By
Harriet Martineau. Fox.

We have here a sort of supplement to the delightful history of Ella of Garveloch, which is no less interesting than its predecessor, and is taken at a later period, when wealth and commerce begin to exert their influence upon the little wild colony. This cannot be better told than in the opening words of the first chapter:—

"About ten years before the period at which our story opens, the laird of Garveloch had transferred his property in that and the neighbouring isles to a large fishing company. The terms of the bargain were advantageous to both parties. The laird was to receive, in addition to the annual rent which his island-tenants had been accustomed to pay, and which did not amount to more than sixty guineas a year altogether, a sum of several hundred pounds in consideration of the improvements to be effected on the property. As there was little prospect of such improvements being effected, to the extent of some hundreds of pounds, by himself or his poor tenants, the transaction was evidently a profitable one to him; while the company reasonably expected that the changes they were about to introduce would much more than repay their advance—an expectation which was not disappointed.

"Among the numerous fishing stations established by this opulent company, there was one in Islay. A warehouse was erected, where salt for curing the fish, hemp for making nets, timber for boat-building, staves

for cooperage, and all materials necessary for the apparatus of an extensive fishery, were stored. A curing-house, a building-yard, and a cooperage were at hand; a pier, around which there was a perpetual traffic of boats, stretched out into the sea. A little town had risen round these buildings, where but a few years before there had been only a congregation of sea-fowl. Where their discordant cries alone had been heard, there now prevailed a mingling of sounds, not more musical to the ear perhaps, but by far more agreeable to the heart. The calls of the boatmen, the hammer of the cooper, the saw of the boat-builder, the hum from the curing-house, where women and girls were employed in gutting, salting, and packing the herrings, and drying the cod, the shouts and laughter of innumerable children at play among the rocks,—all these together formed such a contrast to the desolation which prevailed ten years before, that the stranger who returned after a long absence scarcely knew the place to be the same.

"Nor was the change less remarkable in others, of the islands. Rows of dwellings stretched along many a favourable line of beach and huts peeped out of a cove here and there, where no trace of man had been formerly seen, but an occasional kelping fire. On Garveloch a fishing village had arisen where the dwelling of Angus and Ella had for some years stood alone. The field which they had cultivated from the year of their marriage till the establishment of the fishing company, was now covered with cottages; and a row of huts, most of them with a patch of ground behind, stretched from the bar on the one hand, to the promontory which had been Ronald's on the other. Angus and Ella lived in the old house; but it was so much enlarged and improved as to look like a new one: it was the best in the village; and it was made so for comfort, not for show. There were nine children to be housed; and both their parents knew enough of comfort to see the necessity of providing room and ventilation if they wished to keep their large family in health and good habits. They had worked hard, and on the whole successfully; and though the perpetual calls upon them prevented their laying by much in the form of money, they had been able to provide their dwelling with more convenient furniture, and their children with more decent clothing, than was usually thought necessary in the society of which they formed a part."

Of the growing society at Garveloch, we have the following very natural picture:—

"The widow Cuthbert was regarded as the lady of the island, though she was no richer, no better dressed, and, for all her neighbours knew, no better born than any around her. She was better educated; and this was her title to distinction. No one else, except Angus, had seen so much of the world; and even he could not make a better use of what he had learned. There was a sober truth in the judgments she formed of people and of circumstances, which was all the more impressive from the

modesty with which she held her opinions, and the gentleness with which she declared them. Those opinions were respected by all, from the highest to the lowest,—from Ella down to Meg Murdoch. Her management of her little family was watched by all who cared for the welfare of their children, and her skill and industry in her occupation were marvelled at by those who did not attempt to imitate her.

"It would have amused an attentive observer to see how a distinction of ranks was already growing up in the little society of Garveloch, where none had originally brought wealth enough to authorize such distinction. Next to the widow Cuthbert ranked the farmer and his family—the Duffs, who were looked up to from their great importance as corn-growers to the society. The produce of their fields being much in request, they had enlarged their farm, and improved it to a great extent. By means of the more ample supplies of manure afforded by the curing of so much fish, and through the help of the better implements and modes of tillage which their prosperity enabled them to use, their land produced twice as much as when they had entered upon the farm, fifteen years before. They had every inducement to go on increasing its productiveness; for corn still fell short, and supplies were brought now and then from other islands to make out till harvest. Of late, indeed, the demand had somewhat lessened, as an Irish family had set the example of growing potatos in their patch of ground, and many of their neighbours had done the same, with the hope of saving the expense of oat and barley meal. Among these were the former tenants of the farm, the Murdochs, who, having failed in all their undertakings, now had recourse to what they supposed an easy and nearly infallible method of getting a living. They had sunk from year to year, and there was little hope of their rising again, when they began to place their dependence on potato tillage. They now filled a station as much below that of Ella and her husband as Ella's had been supposed below theirs on the day of her father's funeral. Murdoch had not parted with any of his pride or jealousy as he parted with his worldly comforts. He still looked with an evil eye on Angus; and, when disposed to vent his complaints or seek counsel, went to new comers in preference to old neighbours. He was particularly intimate with the O'Rory's, who lived in a cottage next to his own, and who were of an age and in circumstances too unlike his own to come into comparison with him in any way.

"Dan O'Rory was a lad of twenty, who had brought over his yet younger wife to seek employment in the Garveloch fishery, as there was none to be had at Rathmullin. He had not yet been able to make interest for wages on board one of the busses, and he had no boat of his own; so he dug up and planted his potato-ground, and was content, talking of future doings, but caring little as yet whether they ever came to pass. One evil of their coming to pass, indeed, would be that there would be no longer time

for talk, which Dan loved full as well as did Noreen, his wife."

With this our extracts must now conclude, and we turn to the "summary of principles illustrated in this volume," merely to express our surprise at the liberal and disinterested manner in which the cause of the fair sex is there taken up. Miss Martineau is perfectly Malthusian in her doctrines, and after a brief examination of the balance between supply and consumption, the increase of population, &c. &c. declares, that "by bringing no more children into the world than there is a subsistence provided for, society may preserve itself from the miseries of want. In other words, the timely use of the *mild preventive check* may avert the horrors of any positive check" to increasing population, such as crime and misery. Miss Martineau's philosophy may do very well in theory, but we are afraid must fail of "illustration," in the ordinary course of events.

GLANCES AT BOOKS.

THE race of periodicals, cheap ones especially, is going on with increasing rapidity and headlong intrepidity. No less than half-a-dozen have sprung up during the past ten days, only two of which, however, at the utmost, have any prospect of a long life and a merry one. Lord Brougham's book-making society's *Penny Magazine*, the dullest of the bunch, has been thriving in the inverse ratio of its merits, as all chartered monopolies, and committee directed speculations must thrive in these days of humbug. Jealous of their profits, the "Society for Christian Knowledge" have set up a rival paper, entitled, *The Saturday Magazine*, which as far as dullness is concerned, bids fair to outshine its elder brother of the very small folio page. Meantime a more spirited, and a more useful, and as we hope it will prove, a more successful candidate, has been started by a simple, unchartered, and untitled individual, Mr. Pinnock, the author of the school catechisms, &c. whose *Guide to Knowledge*, promises to be an excellent work, admirably adapted to its object by the style in which it is compiled and written, and illustrated with really useful and attractive plates, of a geographical and historical nature. Besides this, we have before us the first number of *The Graphic and Historical Illustrator*, a threepenny publication, containing a variety of most interesting antiquarian and topographical matter, illustrated by excellent wood-cuts; the whole being edited by Mr. E. W. Brayley, F. S. A. &c. &c. *Every Man's Paper* we fear will not prove its title valid; and *The Weekly Miscellany* is as cheap as the two "societies" two *Penny Magazines*, and by far more entertaining.

Fort Risbane, or Three Days' Quarantine, by a Détenu, (Smith and Elder,) is a fanciful and random production, supposed to result from a three days' incarceration of an English party in the dungeons of health at Calais, after their arrival from these then infected shores. The principal individuals

thus imprisoned, and whose conversation forms the staple material of the volume, are a Mr. Hartley, and his delicate and interesting daughter; Mr. Pungent, a wit of the laughing-philosophy-school; the Rev. Orthodox Tythinkind, a common-place satire upon beneficed clergy; the learned Mr. Scrinium, "The Great Editor;" Mr. Pentinax, a periodical scribbler and a fellow of all the learned societies in the four quarters of the globe; Mr. Cyclovote, another well-known literary character, (*quære*, Dr. Bowring?) Mrs. Benignus; Mr. and Mrs. Scribbleton, both wielders of the grey-goose quill, and illustrative of the proverb—"two of a trade never agree;"—Mr. Mrs. and the two Misses Goodenough, rich city people, pompous and vulgar as need be; Monsieur Deroi, a Carlist from Holyrood; Mr. Ouvert, a thorough republican; the Honourable Augustus Manikin, a thorough-bred "exquisite;" Mr. M'Molitor, a visionary projector; and Mr. M'Corquodale, the political economist, in whom some may find a resemblance to the real man M'Culloch. The conversations are various, and of various degrees of merit; some are pointed and successful enough, particularly when in the circumscribed experience of their prison, they lead to practical illustrations of sage doctrines of national policy.

Messrs. Jennings and Chaplin have just reprinted Dr. Percy's very beautiful version of the "Beggar's Daughter of Bethnal Green," illustrated by six spirited woodcuts, after designs by Harvey, which surpass any thing of the kind we have lately seen. In the present version of this very popular ballad, the Beggar, at the marriage of his daughter, declares himself to be Henry de Montfort, the eldest son of Simon, Earl of Leicester. He relates that, having fallen in the battle of Evesham, from a blow, which deprived him of sight, he lay among the dead until the next evening, when a baron's daughter, searching for her slain father's body, discovered him, and having led him from the fatal field, nursed him in secret, became his bride, and

"Made him glad father of prettye Bessee."

She sold her jewels, and then, in beggar's attire, they came to Bethnal Green, where they remained concealed, until, at the marriage of "a gallant yong knight" with "prettye Bessee," the "seely Blind Beggar" surprised the wedding guests with the secret of his nobility.

For the entertainment of young persons, Messrs. Jennings and Chaplin are publishing, monthly, a series of tales, historical and domestic, by W. H. Harrison. The first number comprises the "Lost Deed," a very interesting but unsatisfactory story. We would recommend the author, if he wishes his work to be popular amongst his intended readers, not to leave them quite so abruptly.

We have before us a little *Catechism of Useful Knowledge, adapted for Schools*, and published by M'Phun of Glasgow, which, as far as the variety and selection of its materials is concerned, is all that could be desired. The explanations are generally

satisfactory, with the exception of a few such passages as—(*Minerals*,) "bodies destitute of organization"—(*Eruption of a Volcano*,) "the discharge of lava and ashes, produced by the action of internal heat."—(*Lava*,) "a mineral fluid emitted from the crater," &c. &c. where simpler words might easily be found to describe that which must here remain a mystery to very young scholars.

The Doomed One, or We Met at Glenlyon, (Newman and Co.) is a tale of the highlands, and therefore bears no other resemblance to "The Doomed" of Messrs. Smith and Elder, recently noticed in these columns, than in its title. It is a cleverly written romance, by the romantically-named Rosalie St. Clair, giving a very fair picture of the feuds and clanships of northern Scotland.

We have to acknowledge the safe arrival of Mr. Kidd's "Picturesque Pocket Companion to Richmond and its Vicinity." Often as we have visited these romantic and beautiful retreats, we promise ourselves an early opportunity of repeating our trip, for the mere company of this our intelligentilliputian guide. It is pleasantly written, and actually studded with wood-cuts by Mr. G. W. Bonner.

Mr. Rennie was, doubtless, not dissatisfied with our review of his "Alphabet of Insects," and has accordingly forwarded us his *Conspectus of Butterflies and Moths*, a most industriously compiled little volume, containing, in about three hundred pages of close type, a complete technical and descriptive vocabulary, for the use of beginners in the study of insects. In his preface, he repeats his attack upon the "affection of mongrel Latin;" but more moderately and discriminately than in his previous little book. He remarks, "I have avoided as much as possible the use of terms not intelligible to a general reader, deeming it an outrage upon common sense, to invite a student to a museum filled with the most beautiful productions of creative wisdom, and, at the same time, taking some pains to fill the rooms with smoke before he is introduced, with set purpose to blind him, and cause him to stumble," adding, facetiously enough,—"naturalists have obviously acquired an artificial taste for the smoke." We can promise our readers that there is no affinity to smoke in Mr. Rennie's present volume, which is well filled and substantially printed.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE TURKISH NATION.

The origin of the Turkish race is ascribed, by most of the Mohammedan writers, to a son of Japhet, named Türk; to whom they assign the rank of primogeniture among the children of that patriarch; styling him, by way of pre-eminence, *Yafet oghlan*, or 'the son of Jafet,' while Japhet, the father of so illustrious a son, receives the appellation of *Abou'l Türk*, 'the father of Türk.' There are some few writers indeed, but not of equal authority or importance, who deny the claim of Türk to pri-

mogeniture; awarding that distinction to his brother Tchin, the ancestor of the Chinese: but the preponderance of testimony in favour of the right of Türk does not allow us to give much credit to these authors. Making due allowance for the accuracy of the genealogy, one fact alone remains evident—that all the Mohammedan writers assert the antiquity of the Turks, and that they are only doubtful whether to declare them or the Chinese the more ancient. The establishment of the Turks as a nation, and the founding their seat of empire, are likewise assigned to almost as early a period. After the death of Japhet, we are told that the knowledge and attainments of Türk rendered him the superior of his brethren, and he was universally acknowledged as sovereign over all the countries which their families inhabited. Türk being thus situated, turned his mind towards founding a seat suited to the grandeur of his empire; and made the tour of his dominions, in order to select a place adapted to his purpose. He at length discovered a beautiful valley, on the banks of a lake, encompassed by mountains; and being pleased with the situation, he built a city of wood and earth. The place in which this city was built, our author tell us, was called, by the Turks and Chinese, Selinga, and by the Arabians Siluk. It may be urged, in support of this tradition, that the Chinese annals, and the most ancient accounts of the Turks themselves, also place the original seat of the Turkish race in the neighbourhood of the Toula and Selinga; and there is little doubt of the correctness of this position: but whether it was the seat of a Turkish empire at so early a period as that which is assigned for the age of Türk must be determined by better authority. * * *

Türk, we are informed, was succeeded in his kingdom by Tunek, the eldest of his four sons, who was the author of many useful inventions. He is said to have been the cotemporary of Kaimars, the first king of Persia. The fourth in descent from Türk was Alingeh Khan. In his reign, the nation forgot the faith of their ancestors, which is represented as a pure Theism, and became idolaters. He had two sons, Tatar and Mongol; and it is from these princes that the tribes which they governed took their names. From Alingeh Khan, until the eighth descendant of Türk, we read of nothing very remarkable: but the birth of Oghuz, which is fixed at 2824 B. C., seems to be the commencement of the national traditions of the Turks. The birth of this illustrious descendant of Türk was preceded by the most astonishing prodigies. At the age of one year, when Kara Khan, his father, was about to give him a name, in the presence of the chief men of his kingdom, he anticipated him by declaring aloud that his name was Oghuz. In his cradle he was a believer in the Unity of the Deity; and refused to receive the nourishment of his mother until she had professed the same faith. Kara Khan, infuriated that his son should renounce his idols and worship an Invisible Being, gave orders that he should be surrounded and taken prisoner while

hunting. Oghuz received information of his father's intentions; and some of his friends having come very opportunely to his assistance, Kara Khan was overthrown, and killed by an arrow. These friends, from the timely assistance they afforded him, Oghuz named *igour* or *ouigour*, signifying 'auxiliaries' or 'assistants.' Being declared king on the death of his father, Oghuz endeavoured to propagate the faith he professed. Those who became converts were loaded with favours; but those who still adhered to the worship of idols were either put to death or compelled to fly. A neighbouring prince declared war: Oghuz was victorious, and, entering his country, possessed himself of all his treasures: these were so great, that Oghuz was unable to transport them to his own territories, until some of his soldiers invented a sort of car or chariot in which the spoils could be conveyed. Oghuz named the inventors *kangli*; which became the appellation of a large tribe. He reduced the kingdoms of Kha-thai, Tangut, and Kara Khathai; but was not so successful against the dominions of a prince named Itborak Khan: Oghuz was there obliged to act on the defensive, and to take up an advantageous position to prevent defeat. It was in this expedition that *Kapt-chak* received its name, from a circumstance connected with 'a hollow tree,' which was the signification of that name in the language of the Oghuzians. Seventeen years after this first attempt, Oghuz again invaded the dominions of Itborak Khan, and became master of his territories. Samarkand, Bokhara, and Balkh, submitted to his arms; and he advanced against the town of Khor in the midst of winter. The snow having fallen very deep, his troops were much harassed with the fatigues of the march, and a party who had lost their camels and horses were unable for some time to join the main body. These troops, on their arrival, were interrogated by Oghuz as to the cause of their absence. They replied, that so large a quantity of snow had fallen in their line of march, that their beasts had perished, and they had with difficulty accomplished the object on foot. The Khan, in derision of such a cause preventing their joining him in his engagement with the enemy, gave them the name of *Karlik* or 'snowy,' and thus the tribe of Karlik acquired its name. The Prince of Kashmir successfully opposed his attacks for a whole year, but he was at length defeated. The next expedition Oghuz undertook was directed against Iran. The reduction of Khorassan, the conquest of the cities of Irak, Azarbijan, and Armenia, added fresh laurels to his brow; and these appear to have been among the last of the exploits of Oghuz Khan. In this expedition the tribe of *Kal-adg* received its name. Some stragglers having remained behind, to provide food for their families, were surnamed by Oghuz, *Kul-adg*, from two words signifying 'remain' and 'hungry,' and were dismissed to their homes to superintend their domestic affairs: they afterwards became a tribe, and retained this appellation. In the same manner, almost all the Turkish tribes ascribe

the origin of their names to Oghuz, who seems to have been very liberal in bestowing appellatives. The six sons of this monarch were named, *Giun*, signifying 'the sun'; *Ai*, 'the moon'; *Yolduz*, 'a star'; *Giuk*, 'heaven'; *Tag*, 'a mountain'; and *Tengiz*, 'the sea.' Some time before his death, Oghuz commanded a trusty attendant to bury a golden bow in the eastern part of a certain forest frequented by the young princes in their hunting excursions; and three arrows, of the same metal, in the western part. The princes, in following the chase, divided into two bodies: the elder brothers took the path which led to the eastern part of the forest; the younger pursued that of the west: the former became the possessors of the golden bow; the latter discovered the three arrows. The spoils of the chase, and the treasures they had found, were, on their return, delivered to their father; who immediately issued orders for the nobles of his kingdom to assemble, and made a great feast, at which he invited them to attend. During the banquet, he commanded the golden bow and arrows to be brought forth; and dividing the bow into three parts, he bestowed one on each of his three eldest sons; the younger receiving each an arrow. Accompanying the gift with its explanation, Oghuz told them, that in ancient times the bow was among them the symbol of sovereignty; the arrow typified the minister or ambassador. To *Giun*, the eldest of his sons, he committed the supreme and immediate government of his kingdom; the descendants of his two other brothers being only entitled to the throne in case of failure of the descendants of *Giun*; while the three younger brothers were to remain the ministers of the elder for ever. The possessors of the broken bow were named, from that circumstance, *Butchuk*, which signifies 'broken': the three younger brothers were surnamed *Utchok*, or the 'three arrows.' The death of Oghuz took place shortly after this event; and, after a reign of 116 years, he was succeeded by *Giun*, the eldest of his six sons.

Though the history of Oghuz is thus embellished with fiction, his reign, the purity of his faith, and the laws which he established, were long remembered throughout the extent of Tartary; and his birth forms the first epoch of national Turkish tradition and chronology, detached from the genealogies of the followers of Mohammed.—*David's Grammar of the Turkish Language, just published.*

ON BELLS.

Bells had their origin in China; and, like the ancient gong, are principally made of copper, richly ornamented with inscriptions inside and out. As their use was to dispel and clear the air of evil spirits, they were made of the most enormous size. The Russians adopted them in the tenth century, and their famous bell at Moscow, weighing forty-three thousand pounds, when put into motion, would agitate the air of the surrounding country for forty miles. This notion of their efficacy brought them to England soon after the Conquest; and from

our old records, we learn that the tolling of a bell kept the spirits of darkness from assaulting believers; it dispelled thunder, and prevented the devil from molesting either the church or congregation—hence the bells were rung with due ardour and devotion in the time of storms. To insure these valuable services, many, in the dark ages, were induced to bequeath property for the support of favourite bells, which were rung at their funeral, to the discomfiture of the arch-fiend, whose attempts to get possession of the soul of the deceased were paralysed by the hallowed sound. In Paris there is a bell of enormous size, two notes lower than great Tom of Lincoln. The catholics have a great reverence for their sounds. The writer was present once at the *Fête Dieu*, in Notre Dame, and witnessed an exhibition of this kind. Upon the Host entering the church, the congregation were greeted with eight military drums, keeping up an incessant roll as they marched up the aisle with a detachment of soldiers. Then came the priests and choir-men, straining their throats—the great bell tolling its double F below the line, in concert with all the small fry of the steeple. Next, in succession, came a military band with gongs, and clashing cymbals—soldiers grounding their arms—the stupendous organ from on high pouring down upon this terrific din every note within its compass. Such was the accumulated noise, that it was impossible to make yourself heard to a bystander, though you shouted in his ears! When the uproar had a little ceased, we listened to the more grateful sound of the mass, which was performing in a distant part of the cathedral.

The Hollanders exhibit the most enthusiastic fondness for bells—every church and public building is hung round with them in endless variety; and as this music seems to be the national taste, they are never left at rest. They are kept striking and chiming every quarter of an hour the day through; but this is not enough;—on the Stadhouse, a performer is stationed, to play to the market-people a superior sort of bell-music upon the *carillons*. This is done by a contrivance similar to the keys of a piano-forte, which the carillonneur strikes with all his might, though an Herculean task, often with science and dexterity. In Amsterdam, it is thought, not less than a thousand bells are kept constantly ringing, which create such an incessant jingle, as to be intolerable to strangers, and enough to distract the ears of any one but those of a Dutchman. It is extraordinary, that a people, so grave and thoughtful, can feel amused at such a senseless jargon as this confusion produces. Fortunately for us, our bells in England are of a more sombre cast, and are found of great use in proclaiming the hour in large and populous cities. St. Paul's has a fine tone upon the chord of B flat, which tone, at its birth, was denominated the note C; our scale having risen so much since that time, as apparently to sink the bell a note below the present C. The finest bell in England is great Tom of Lincoln, considerably older than St. Paul's, so much so, that this bell, which was originally C, has sunk to A upon

the lowest space. The elevated situation of this bell, gives it an horizon of nearly fifty miles in every direction. It is never rung, lest it should bring down the steeple in which it hangs, and never tolled but upon the death of a royal personage. When rung in this partial way, its tones roll over the surrounding distance with a sublime effect.

THE CRIES OF DOGS.

Dogs in a state of nature never bark; they simply whine, howl, and growl; this explosive noise is only found among those which are domesticated. Sonnini speaks of the shepherd's dogs in the wilds of Egypt as not having this faculty; and Columbus found the dogs which he had previously carried to America, to have lost their propensity to barking. The ancients were aware of this circumstance. Isaiah compares the blind watchmen of Israel, to these animals, 'they are dumb—they cannot bark.' But, on the contrary, David compares the noise of his enemies, to the 'dogs round about the city.' Hence the barking of a dog is an acquired faculty; an effort to speak which he derives from his associating with man. 'The dog indicates his different feelings by different tones of voice; and thus the shepherd's dog (in England) has a command over his flock, without using positive violence. Their tones are so marked, that they are recognised as expressive of anger or fear. The horse knows from the bark of a dog when he may expect an attack upon his heels.'

It cannot be doubted that dogs in this country bark more and fight less than formerly. This may be accounted for by the civilization of the lower orders, who have gained a higher taste in their sports and pastimes than badger-baitings and dog-fights; and it may with truth be asserted, that the march of intellect has had its influence even upon the canine race, in destroying that natural ferocity for war, which (happily for the world) is now spent more in words than in blows.

It has not fallen within the writer's pursuits to have much knowledge of dogs, but it would be an amusing investigation to analyse their language, which is not only curious but copious. That they understand the general force of language, and the particular meaning of many words, cannot be doubted. Miss Hawkins tells us, that the little dog Mr. Garrick used to take to the play, had so fine an ear, that he always knew his master by the tone of voice from the other actors, and showed great signs of joy when he was speaking.

PARROTS.

Parrots, like cuckoos, form their notes deep in the throat, and show great aptitude in imitating the human voice. A most remarkable instance I met with at Mr. Braham's villa in Brompton. A lady, who had great admiration for his talents, presented him with a parrot, on which she had bestowed great pains in teaching it to talk. After dinner, during a pause in the conversation, I was startled by a voice from one corner of the room calling out in a

strong hearty manner, 'Come, Braham, give us a song!' Nothing could exceed the surprise and admiration of the company. The request being repeated, and not answered, the parrot struck up the first verse of '*God save the King*,' in a clear, warbling tone, aiming at the style of the singer, and sang it through. The ease with which this bird was taught, was equally surprising with the performance. The same lady prepared him to accost Catalani, when dining with Mr. Braham, which so alarmed Madame that she nearly fell from her chair. Upon his commencing '*Rule Britannia*,' in a loud and intrepid tone, the chantress fell on her knees before the bird, exclaiming, in terms of delight, her admiration of its talents.

This parrot has only been exceeded by Lord Kelley's, who, upon being asked to sing, replied—'I never sing on a Sunday.' 'Never mind that, Poll, come give us a song.' 'No, excuse me, I've got a cold—don't you hear how hoarse I am?' This extraordinary creature performed the three verses entire of '*God save the King*,' words and music, without hesitation, from beginning to end.—*Music of Nature*.

THE DRAMA.

HAYMARKET.

Friday.—The Marriage of Figaro; A Duel, &c.; John Jones.

Saturday.—She Would and She Would not; a Duel, &c.; the Wolf and the Lamb; the Agreeable Surprise.

Monday.—Speed the Plough; a Duel, &c.; the Rencentre.

Tuesday.—Lodgings for Single Gentlemen; the Way to Keep Him; the Wolf and the Lamb; the Illustrious Stranger.

Wednesday.—A Bold Stroke for a wife; a Duel, &c.; John Jones.

Thursday.—Thirteen to the Dozen; the Court Jester; the School for Scandal.

ENGLISH OPERA, OLYMPIC.

Friday.—The Climbing Boy; the Picturesque; the Middle Temple.

Saturday.—The Climbing Boy; the Haunted Inn.

Monday.—The Climbing Boy; the Evil Eye.

Tuesday.—The Climbing Boy; the Evil Eye.

Wednesday.—The Climbing Boy; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, by Advertisement; the Evil Eye.

Thursday.—The Climbing Boy; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, by Advertisement; the Evil Eye.

The Climbing Boy, produced on Friday by the English opera company, is a strange medley of pathos and vulgarity, in which, however, the latter decidedly has the best of it. It is founded upon the well-known Montague story, with a little bit of family intrigue and villainy to make it "thick and slab." Reeve's *Jack Rags*, a nondescript raggamuffin, is in length and breadth the main support of the piece, which is by Mr. Peake, and proved highly successful. Reeve also gives his imitations of contemporary actors, in the extravaganza of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, by Advertisement; that of Kean being especially applauded.

A new petite drama in two acts was produced on Thursday at the Haymarket, under the title of *The Court Jester*, being from the pen, we believe, of Mr. Buckstone. All the fun of the piece rests with Farren, who, as *Master Hugo Bambino*, a broken-down and wandering pedagogue, arrives at the

court of the Duke of Ferrara, by whom he fancies himself elected privy councillor, and taking his seat amongst all the nobles of the land assembled, gives them "a bit of his mind," exposing alike their chicanery and their ignorance. For instance, they are debating about the policy of their royal master's marrying the daughter of the Duke of Mantua, when Hugo abruptly interrupts them;—"I tell you you're all wrong! for the Duke of Mantua *does not happen to have a daughter!*" All are confounded, and confess, with great ministerial coolness, that—"that was a view of the case they had not yet taken." Miss Taylor plays the part of *Pauline*, Hugo's niece, who has some time back secretly married a certain young stranger, *Frederick*, who now turns out to be the Duke himself, by whom she is honourably received, and presented to the court as his royal consort. There were plenty of rather broad political allusions, which kept the audience in the vein of applause; in other respects, the piece presents little of merit or interest. After its conclusion, that is, about half-past ten, Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, which is a three-hour-and-a-half piece, was commenced. We sat out the first act, and never were we so annoyed as at the hurried and careless manner in which it was gabbled over. Farren made neither point nor pause,—and Harley did not seem to have taken the trouble to dress for *Sir Benjamin Backbite*. Miss Taylor must beware of affectation; her mannerisms are quite overpowering; and in mincing her words, she is apt to mispronounce them. She should never say *sc-u* for "sue;" *se-uperintend* for "superintend," &c. &c. The house was pretty well attended, and we observe that Kean is again engaged for a few nights, as an additional attraction.

MINORS.

SADLER'S WELLS.—*The Pet of the Petticoat* seems to be growing a greater favourite on every repetition. Barnett's music, and the excellent acting of Mrs. Fitzwilliam are its chief supports;—the characters sustained by Williams and Buckstone, a gardener and a dancing-master, although amusing, are mere excrescences. A melo-drama of a very regular description, turning on that fertile theme, a "mysterious murder," has been produced as an afterpiece, under the title of *The Zingaro Girl*.

CITY.—Mr. Balls, who, with Mr. Jones, divided the light-comedy parts last season at Drury, has singularly enough succeeded that gentleman in the Milton Street speculation, and is himself, at present, one of the chief attractions. He has brought out *John Bull*, (a five act comedy!) in which he performs *Tom Shuffleton*, and the burletta of *John Street Adelphi*, which is transformed at once into a novelty, as well as a piece of local interest, by being re-dubbed, (by "special desire," no doubt,) 7, *Finsbury Square*, and the hero removed from the West End to the favoured parallelogram in question.

PAVILION.—*The Hunchback* seems likely to pay a round of visits to all the minor houses;—last week he made his *bow* at the

Surrey, and now he is "lord of the descendant" in the East, where the principal novelty is the appearance of Messrs. Freer and Cobham, on alternate nights, in the parts of *Modus* and the hero.

ASTLEY'S AMPHITHEATRE.—The standard favourites of this fortunate house are so attractive as to preclude the necessity of much novelty;—two old friends, *Mazeppa* and *The High-mettled Racer*, are the reigning magnets. The "lion tigers" of Atkins's menagerie figured as the heroes of the last novelty, but have now returned to their more "legitimate" boards! Ducrow is as great as ever.

MUSIC.

KING'S THEATRE.

FOR Brugnoli's benefit, on Thursday, *La Gazza Ladra* was revived, with De Meric, as *Ninetta*, a very pleasing performance, and Tamburini, as her father, *Fernando*, who was in splendid voice. The opera was followed by the whole of the grand ballet of *L'Anneau Magique*, produced in all its pristine splendour, and with Brugnoli as the heroine, her first appearance since her late accident. The dancing, grouping, and stage effects were of the highest order, and received as much applause as a rather thin house could give. The German company will produce Weber's grand opera of *Euryanthe* on Wednesday, in which Madame Fischer, the new prima Donna, will make her debut.

MISCELLANEA.

Cocoa-nut Day.—This festival occurs about the middle of August. Tents and booths are erected in great numbers; and nothing can be more curious and picturesque than the appearance of the assembled multitude at this annual scene of joy and festivity. The numerous collection of gay palankeens, and golden houdas, the shrill native trumpet, the cheerful horn, the deep hollow-sounding *tom-tom*, the banners and streamers of every form and hue, and the thousand varieties of costume, astonish and delight the European stranger. The chief ceremony of the day is extremely simple. It consists in throwing a cocoa nut into the sea, at a period which is considered by the Hindoos, as the opening of the season. This is done, we believe, as a propitiation to that element. The gorgeous dresses of the female population are very striking. The soft silks of China and Bengal, the rustling kinkob of Poonah and Ahmedabad, the shawls of Cashmere, and the tasteful dresses of the European fair, who throng to witness the spectacle, all mingling and glittering beneath an Indian sun, form a perfect scene of enchantment and romance.

Colossal Icicles.—In the very deep and narrow vallies which intersect a branch of the Black Mountains in South Wales, a very singular spectacle may be witnessed in the early spring months. During winter the frosts, which are exceedingly severe in those elevated regions, produce vast icicles on the jagged and beetling rocks which

overhang the vallies. Sometimes they are as large in diameter as the trunk of a tree, and have the appearance of long inverted obelisks. Detached from the rocks by the sun's warmth, these icy columns are dashed down in ten thousand glittering fragments along the cliffs, and have then the appearance of huge pillars of diamond hurled from some fairy battlements. It is delightful to gaze from a distance at these thundering masses, but it would be death to stand within reach of the enormous splinters that fly around on all sides as they fall.

Insects in India.—During the rainy season in India, the houses are so infested with insects, that it is necessary to have little covers (usually of silver) for tumblers and teacups. The air is so still and stagnant that persons are compelled to keep their doors wide open, and consequently the tables are thickly covered with a variety of the most disgusting vermin. These mingling with the blood-thirsty mosquitoes, are enough to make a saint delirious. At this season, also, the white ants are extremely numerous and destructive. In one night they have been known to spread themselves over a large apartment, and devour the whole matting. They frequently take possession of the beams that support the roofs of the houses, and destroy them in a few weeks. Nothing is secure against the depredations of these mischievous little creatures. Tents, carriages, beds, carpets, and clothes of all descriptions, are subject to their voracious appetites.

CORRESPONDENCE.

We are obliged to *Benedict* for his letter;—most probably he will find his remarks attended to before long.

Guardian's Literary Intelligencer.

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